



Lesson 4: Open-ended Sentences

- A way to have victims elaborate on the issue at hand and to learn more about what the victim is thinking and feeling.
- Beginning sentences with “how” and “what” are generally viewed as positive and non-accusatory.
- “Why” questions are often interpreted as negative and accusatory, and should not be used.

Lesson 5: Restating or Paraphrasing

- Shows the victim that you are:
 - Following the conversation.
 - Trying to clarify the context of the conversation.

Lesson 6: Summarizing

- Used to understand what the victim is trying to convey.
- Is effective to eliminate personal filters, assumptions, judgments and beliefs that can distort the message that is being sent.
- Helps create a basis for further discussion.

Lesson 7: Non-verbal Communication Skills

- Posture and body orientation.
- Hand movements and gestures.
- Eye movement and contact.
- Changes in breathing patterns.
- Blushing, red spots.
- Body movement.

Lesson 8: Recognizing Communication Pitfalls

- Any action that is harmful to the victim or that projects some form of expectation is generally cause for concern.
- Other pitfalls:
 - Inadvertently burdening the victim.
 - Engaging in detrimental conversations about allied professionals.
- Please refer to “NOVA Communication Guidelines.”

Lesson 9: Compassionate Listening

- Helping victims find the right words for what they have experienced, and defining their experiences *in their own terms*.

Lesson 10: General Communication Tips

- Use the victim's name, and ask how s/he would like to be addressed.
- Provide your name and business card.
- Explain your reason for being in contact and the agency you represent.
- Use personalized language.
- Be honest.
- Be sincere in your words and actions.

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13

Lesson 10: General Communication Tips (cont.)

- Eliminate phrases that will hurt the victim.
- Avoid false assurances.
- Recognize that your presence is not going to solve all of the victim's problems.
- Allow victims the right to finish their sentences.
- Leave statistics and your own story at home!

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14